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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**October 30, 2006**

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<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae>

**SOUTH LAKE TAHOE MAN CONVICTED OF USING THE  
INTERNET TO OBTAIN AND TO POSSESS  
SEXUALLY EXPLICIT IMAGES OF MINOR GIRLS**

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that JOSEPH JOHN GEORGE SCANIO, 64, of South Lake Tahoe, California pled guilty today in U.S. District Court in Sacramento to a single count of possession of images depicting the sexual exploitation of minors.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the South Lake Tahoe Police Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Michelle Rodriguez, who is prosecuting the case, SCANIO used the Internet and a South Lake Tahoe business office computer to download from the internet and to possess sexually explicit images of minors. SCANIO possessed over 500 images of actual minor female victims. According to the plea agreement in this case, SCANIO will be required to register as a sex offender. SCANIO will forfeit his computers, hard drives, and other digital storage devices that he used to possess child pornography.

This successful prosecution of SCANIO is part of "Operation Valley Predator," a three-day multi-agency operation spearheaded by the Sacramento Office of the FBI and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California as part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC), a national initiative of the U.S. Department of Justice, designed to increase federal and state prosecutions of violent sexual predators of children. As a part of Project Safe Childhood, the United States Attorney's Office in both Sacramento and Fresno has teamed with state and local agencies throughout the Eastern District to enhance law enforcement presence on the Internet, and to educate the public and children of safe Internet use. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to [www.projectsafefchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafefchildhood.gov), or call the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

SCANIO is scheduled to be sentenced for his child pornography possession on January 8, 2007. The maximum penalty he faces is 10 years imprisonment, a life term of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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